REMARKS

Disposition of Claims

Upon entry of the foregoing amendments, claims 1, 3-6, and 8-10 will remain pending in the application and stand ready for further action on the merits. Claims 1 and 6 have been amended to clarify that the housing of the dental scaler apparatus is a unitary, single piece structure having a first base side integrally connected to a second base side. The first and second base sides each include foot projections for supporting the apparatus in vertical and horizontal positions, respectively. The apparatus further includes a holder side portion, which is integrally connected to the second base side. The holder side portion includes a cradle for storing the scaler handpiece therein when the handpiece is not being used. In addition, dependant claims 2 and 7 and method claims 11-20 been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. The limitations of claims 2 and 7 have been incorporated into claims 1 and 6, respectively. The amendments to claims 1 and 6 are fully supported by the specification, particularly at page 2, paragraph 4; and by the drawings and originally filed claims. No new matter has been added to the application.

Objections to the Drawings

The Office Action first objects to the drawings under 37 CFR §1.83(a), asserting that the drawings do not show every element that is given a reference numeral in the Specification. More particularly, the first paragraph under the heading, "Detailed Description of the Invention" at page 1 describes a scaler handpiece (14) having a tip (15) and magnetostrictive stack (17). As the Examiner correctly points out, the drawings do not call out the tip (15) or magnetostrictive stack (17). The Office Action requests that corrected drawing sheets, showing the tip and magnetostrictive elements, be submitted. Instead, Applicants have amended the Specification, as detailed above, to clearly state that the tip and magnetostrictive elements are not shown in the drawings. It is respectfully submitted that this amendment is proper. The tip and magnetostrictive stack are commonly known elements used in conventional dental scaler systems. The tip and magnetostrictive stack make up the insert that is placed into the handpiece – the insert is an accessory element to the dental scaler apparatus. It is not essential that the tip and

magnetostrictive stack be shown in the drawings in order to have a proper understanding of the invention. In view of the foregoing amendments to the Specification, this objection to the drawings should be considered moot. Applicants respectfully submit that the drawings, as filed, meet all of the requirements of 37 CFR §1.83(a) and request that this objection be withdrawn.

Objections to the Specification

The Office Action objects to the title of the invention and requests that the Specification be amended to include a more descriptive title. In response, the title has been amended to read "VERTICALLY AND HORIZONTALLY STANDING DENTAL SCALER SYSTEM AND METHOD as noted above. In view of the amendment made to the title, Applicants respectfully request that this objection be withdrawn.

The Office Action next objects to the Specification, because it is missing certain sections including "Background of the Invention" and Brief Summary of the Invention." In response, the Specification has been amended as noted above. All of the amendments made to the Specification are supported by the originally filed Specification. No new matter has been added to the application. Applicants now believe that the elements of the Specification are arranged properly and conform to the requirements under 37 C.F.R. §1.77. In view of the amendments made to the Specification, Applicants respectfully request that this objection be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

The Office Action rejects claims 1-3 and 11-14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Pollock et al., U.S. Patent 6,450,811 ("Pollock") in view of an article entitled " New SEAGATE External Hard Drive is Easiest, Most Rugged, and Coolest on the Market" (September, 2003) from the website, www.SEAGATE.com ("SEAGATE"). It is respectfully submitted that the presently claimed invention, as recited in amended claims 1-20, is not prima facie obvious over the disclosures in Pollock and SEAGATE for the reasons discussed below.

Dental practitioners use ultrasonic dental scaler systems to provide therapeutic and preventive care to their patients. The scaler is used primarily to remove calculus deposits and heavy plaque from tooth surfaces. Referring to FIG. 5 of the subject application, dental scaler

systems generally include a power base unit (10). A flexible handpiece cable (62) connects a handpiece (14) to the base unit (12). An ultrasonic scaling insert having a tip (not shown) is inserted into the handpiece (14). The scaling insert, which is often based on magnetostrictive technology (not shown), vibrates at an ultrasonic frequency to remove the calculus/plaque from tooth surfaces. The scaling insert also may include a conduit for delivering water or other lavage fluids to the tip of the insert. The water is used to irrigate and clean the oral cavity of debris. A water supply line (60) is used to provide water to the scaler system. As shown in FIG. 5, one end of the water supply line is inserted into a connector located on the backside panel of the base unit (10). The other end of the water supply line is connected to a dental office water line (not shown).

Pollock was interested in developing a dental scaler system having a self-contained water reservoir. Pollock contemplated that the dental practitioner could use such a system in locations where a water supply line was not available. This would allow the practitioner to provide scaling treatment wherever he or she wanted to do so. The reservoir could be used to deliver clean water or medicaments effectively to the scaling insert. Pollock describes such a dental scaler system in the '811 Patent. As the Examiner recognizes, the system (10) includes a scaler housing (12), which is positioned above and releasably connected to a reservoir housing (14) and positioned to the side of a compressor housing (16). The scaler housing is "snap-fit" connected to the reservoir and compressor housings (14, 16). In other words, the system (10) described in Pollock is made up of separate housing components that are snap-fitted together. Pollock describes that the scaler housing (12) can be used with the compressor and reservoir housings (14, 16) disconnected (col. 5, lines 59-63). Alternatively, and preferably, the scaler housing (12) is connected to the compressor and reservoir housings (14, 16) (col. 7, lines 44-59).

In contrast to the dental scaler system described in Pollock, the system of the present invention requires a unitary, single-piece, scaler housing (10). The housing (10) includes a first base side panel (26), a second base side panel (40), and a holder side panel (25), which are each integrally connected together. The connectors for the handpiece cable (62) and water supply line (60) and electrical connectors are located on the rear side panel of the housing (10) as shown in